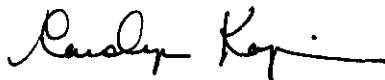


Major Trends in the Anarchist Movement

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolyn Kapinus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Introduction

Deric Shannon

For the purposes of this thesis I have split the material into three sections. In the first section, I attempt to create a primer for those who are unfamiliar with anarchism and its basic tenets. This primer is supposed to cover some of the major trends in the movement and is **not** supposed to make generalizations about the movement itself. With a theoretical perspective such as anarchism that changes with the times and has no specific program, it is much more meaningful to study trends in the movement rather than attempt to outline a specific doctrine. For example, in economics I explain the communitarian theories within anarchism and do not spend time on writers such as Max Stirner (author of *The Ego and His Own*) who are either capitalist apologists or believe in a hierarchical management of resources. This is because the major trends in the movement have been towards communitarian social arrangements. Thus, the primer is to help one get a general idea of these major trends and readers are encouraged to seek out diverse opinions on anarchism from the variety of writers that have existed since the movement's conception.

The second section is a collection of reflections and explanations of some of the major anarchist works. Due to time constraints, some of the writings that may be considered major works could not be covered. Rather, this section is to give a brief introduction to the writings of the anarchists and serves as a reflective backdrop for the further work of the author of this thesis.

The third section deals with the split that is occurring in the movement, its possible origins, and the possible future of anarchism. As the United States undergoes the modernization process and we enter the late modern era some social forces continue to effect the movement in various directions. The majority of this section was written while the author was reading Ray Kurzweil's *The Age of Spiritual Machines* and taking two courses that focused on modernization theory. As such, the writings reflect these studies.

Some of the material within the thesis may be repetitive. All sections were written independently and were not compiled for this writing until all of them were finished.

Furthermore, this thesis is hardly comprehensive, as many more pages of writing would be necessary and time restraints prevented a comprehensive approach to the topics contained. Therefore the reader is encouraged to look outside of this paper for more information regarding this theoretical perspective and the subjects contained herein.

Anarchism 101: A Primer

Deric Shannon

Anarchism is, perhaps, one of the most misunderstood political ideologies of our time. As Luigi Fabbri spells out in his pamphlet "Bourgeois Influences on Anarchism", the misconceptions about the movement are often sensationalized in the mainstream press, as well as by some that call themselves anarchists. From books like the infamous Anarchist's Cookbook to self-styled "anarchists" such as Mick Jagger, the movement seems to be beset with misunderstanding and misinterpretation. It must be stressed, however, that one cannot meaningfully discuss an "anarchist program" or any one definition of the term. Because of the collectivist nature of anarchists and their disregard for doctrinal norms or what some would view as dogma, it is much more effective to discuss major trends in anarchist thought than to chain it down with a simplified definition. Thus, this primer is meant to discuss these major trends and not to define the movement as a whole. I have thought it particularly helpful to spell out some of these trends in specific areas, so I have organized this primer with this thought in mind.

This primer has been created to cover specifically anarchist thought related to the State, economics, education, the environment, religion, and disadvantaged groups. These topics are discussed in this order. Again, it cannot be stressed enough that this primer was created to discuss the major trends in anarchist thought and should not be considered an explanation for any specific 'anarchist' program.

The State

It goes without saying that anarchists not only view the State as unnecessary, but as an institution, it is the enemy of the people. Nevertheless, there are arguments on what exactly is meant by the "State". After all, most would agree that there is a need in any society for social organization to build roads, plumbing facilities, etc. Therefore, it has become necessary for a working definition of the "State" to be created. Most anarchists agree, then, that the State must be defined as the tool used to coerce people through the

use or threat of violence. Most also agree that rather than functioning on a macro-societal level, the organization needed to provide State-like functions should be done on a micro-societal (or communal) level. In other words, the roads and plumbing in a given community should be the responsibility of that community. Where these arguments tend to part is in the debate over dealing with social deviancy. This has caused arguments and infighting between different groups in the movement since its inception.

This problem has plagued anarchists almost since the creation of the term. Some anarchists feel that law is not necessarily something to avoid. What they stress, however, is that laws only be made that involve one person limiting another's freedom. Also, in an anarchist conception, all members of a given community must agree to the formation of laws to begin with, and then to each specific law that is made. Thus, no law could be made by any community that any member did not wish to be limited by. If all did not agree to following these codes, then governance would not take place. Furthermore, if a person is found guilty of breaking one of these laws, most anarchists agree that prisons or jails are not the way to deal with them. As one anarchist said to me, "How can we take people who act like animals and lock them in a cage and treat them like an animal, then set them free and expect them to act like anything but an animal?" Some point to communal responsibility for social deviants, while others suggest not allowing individuals who habitually break the rules of a community to reside or visit there.

Both of these suggestions, however, point to a need for some type of law enforcement. It has been suggested by some that law enforcement officials be elected by the area in which they serve in much the same way that representatives would be in a collectivist economic framework. This means that the positions would always be subject to recall and that they would continuously have to work in the interests of the community. This is a sensitive subject for most anarchists and has resulted in bitter enmity between some groups, as some anarchists want nothing to do with anything that even resembles a

police officer (Bukharin 1981) (Miller 1970) (Lehning 1973) (Dolgoff 1972) (Guerin 1970) (Bakunin 1971).

Economics

The economic philosophy of Marx and other socialist writers have had a profound effect on anarchist economic theory. To simply describe anarchist trends in economic thought as socialist, however, would be a gross over-simplification and error. Most socialist thinkers have left it to the hands of the State to see to the distribution of resources. Anarchists, however, view any State apparatus as an enemy of the people and not to be used for *anything*, much less economics. Furthermore, the trends that are included here have similar ideas about economic organization. Where these groups differ the most is in their foci, and these differences are what I have used to outline the specific philosophy of these groups. The three trends in anarchist thought that seem to be the most pervasive in the movement regarding economics are socialist, collectivist, and syndicalist (or industrial democratic).

Communist and Socialist Anarchism

When some anarchists identify themselves as socialists as well, one must keep in mind that they do not suggest that a State apparatus oversee the distribution of resources. Rather, in the anarchist conception of socialism, societies would be small enough to come to a consensus on economic affairs or they would be controlled democratically. If an individual wanted to live in a society that is small enough to have consensual agreements and she chose to abide by the agreements set by a given community, then there would be no reason that that person would not have an equal voice in economics. Democracy would be used in societies that are much too large to use a consensual agreement and would be used by those individuals that sought out these communities to reside in. It

should be mentioned that in its classical form there were many proponents of anarcho-communism within the movement as well. These individuals called for the complete dissolution of private property and saw the beginning of power relationships to begin with a hierarchical management of resources that seems to coincide with the allowance of private property (Capouya 1975) (Kropotkin 1890) (Miller 1970) (Bukharin 1981) (Chomsky 1995, 1996).

Collectivist Anarchism

The collectivist strain in anarchist thought saw its rise to prominence in the 60's and 70's in the United States. These organizations continue to thrive today in cities where local politics and independent businesses are seen as important foci by the population. The continued existence of these organizations within the greater capitalist society seems to depend on the interest taken in them by the immediate local population. The collectivists saw a widening of the philosophy of worker control and management from a small organizational level to the level of complete societal organization. The main concern to the collectivists was decentralization in organizational forms and a bottom-up structure that would make management positions temporary and completely accountable to the workers that they represented. Thus, economic decisions in any given collective would ultimately be made by the group rather than an individual who "represents" them. In this philosophy, if any representative were to go against the will of the people in the collective, their position could be immediately recalled or even disposed of. Collectivism tends to be an amorphous economic outlook, never fearing to try new systems and disregarding those that do not work to achieve the collective vision of the community that they serve. Thus, collectivism seeks to continually adapt to greater social forces to bring about the maximum good for the group rather than any individual (Rothschild-Whitt 1979) (Lehning 1973) (Dolgoft 1972).

Anarcho-syndicalism

The anarcho-syndicalists rose to prominence during the early 1900's in the United States with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and with the anarchist militias in the Spanish Civil War. These groups took fierce pride in their identity as workers and claimed that since labor created all wealth, all wealth should go to labor. They often referred to the capitalist, or even middle management, as parasites that did not produce, but whose sole purpose was to hold the whip of hierarchy over the backs of the workers who created all things. Industrial democracy, then, encouraged workers to simply take the factories that they worked in from the bosses and occupy them. Rather than a revolutionary outlook, the anarcho-syndicalists proposed that labor all over the world should organize a huge general strike that would eventually lead to the death of capitalism. After this was achieved, the workers would organize by industry and resources would be controlled within each industry democratically. Like the collectivists, the syndicalists believed that representative positions for inter-industry organization should be subject to immediate recall if they did not reflect the interests of the workers. This ambivalence towards representative democracy as we now have in the United States is most likely a result of the marriage between the State and capital in the early industrial development of the United States and continues to play a part in the politics of the anarcho-syndicalists and the IWW to this day (Kornbluh 1964) (Guerin 1970) (Rosemont 1992) (Bird 1985) (Haywood 1929).

Education

Rather than effective splits in the movement over what education should mean and whether any should be compulsory, a large amount of cohesion exists within the movement in regards to this topic. Most anarchists view the current educational system as

simply reinforcing hierarchical standards on the population. When considering the tracking system, anarchists claim that it reinforces the advantages of social class. They argue, then, that it is not education at all, but rather classical conditioning to create obedient workers and new elites to control them. The anarchists argue that education should be valued for its own sake rather than used as an attempt for upward social mobility. Education, to the anarchist, should be a life long process rather than training to make more money.

In order to achieve this goal, the anarchists generally propose an arrangement of the classroom in a bottom-up form as in economics. Thus, the students would grade the teacher on how much they learn rather than vice versa. Evaluations would be necessary for specialized fields (medicine, social sciences, etc.), but would be run by committees rather than by individual teachers. To the anarchists, teaching is an art form that is not necessarily developed through educational achievement. An effective teacher is not created when she is handed a degree certificate. If teachers are not effectively teaching students, then they should find another occupation. This would make the learning process fun, democratic, and result in increased interest by all parties, according to anarchists.

Within this context, the anarchists claim, education would be open as a life long pursuit for all individuals. Rather than life stages where education is of prime importance, the entire lifetime of a given individual would be the frame for education. Most anarchists agree that the combination of effective and interesting teachers with more time to pursue educational attainment (due to large scale socialization of work and resources) would make compulsory education obsolete. Rather, education, would be a leisure that is widely sought out for its personal rewards and benefits as well as an activity that is used for recreation.

Funding for schools in the United States is also an issue that has taken prominence in anarchist circles. Due to property taxes being the major pool for funding of schools here, children from higher social classes are more likely to have sufficient

resources for educational attainment. This is another example of how the education system reproduces the institution of class stratification in the greater society. With a collectivist, syndicalist, or socialist economic structure this problem would become a thing of the past (Avrich 1980) (Macedo 2000).

The Environment

The environment is another issue that has seen much cohesion in the anarchist movement. There is, however, one group of anarchists now that tend to disagree with the majority of anarchists' assessment of the problem-- that of the anarcho-primitivists. Most anarchists have concluded, however, that the main causes for pollution and the degradation of our environment are a direct result of the consumerism and over-production that is emphasized in modern(ized) capitalist societies. In other words, not only does our use of cars (and other convenience commodities) by most individual adults degrade our environment, but the creation of such commodities for profit rather than social use ruins our most prized resource as well (our earth). Many different life-styles have followed as a direct result of this sentiment within the movement.

One of these is vegetarianism. Anarchists have noted that the amounts of grazing land used by factory farms has resulted in a depletion of food for the world population as well as ruined vast plots of land. Thus, a vegetarian diet is a way to combat a variety of problems such as world hunger, the degradation of land, the meaningless torture of animals, as well as a way to combat the greater capitalist system. To some anarchists this takes even greater resistance in vegan diets and even fruitarian. This is to make sure that none of the money that they must spend on food is given to companies that support the tendencies in factory farms that cause the degradation of people, animals, and our environment. In fact, most anarchists agree that eating meat is not wrong in and of itself,

but with the current state of affairs in the meat industry it is a morally indefensible activity, if one is using a factory farm as the provider of one's food.

Furthermore, some anarchists have taken on the title of "green anarchists" to show their support for radical changes in our current environmental policy (or lack thereof). These groups have worked closely with organizations such as Greenpeace, Earth First!, and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) to support liberal reforms toward a sustainable future while keeping the ultimate goal of ending over-production and consumerism in mind. This has included protests against the globalization of capitalism and the over-production that goes with it.

Another trend in anarchist circles has been that of collective farming. This has provided many anarchists with food and given them more opportunities to boycott the industries that they see responsible for the degradation of our earth. It has also given many people the opportunity to collectivize organic wastes in large composts rather than see them thrown away in a dump. Along with this tendency has come a greater appreciation for agrarian issues and increased support for the needs of small, family farmers outside of the factory farming system.

It should be mentioned that a segment of anarchists, calling themselves anarcho-primitivists, have responded that "green anarchy" is not enough. To the primitivists, the beginning of the degradation of the environment is industrialization and our earth will never be safe without a return to "primitive" social arrangements. This reactionary current seems to be a neo-luddite group that deals with things more mystical in nature than academic. Their writings sometimes refer to anarchism as a mental state rather than a social movement and is sometimes anachronistic, using humor to and contradiction to point out the failures in modern industrialized societies. If any have proposed a practical program for the return to these societies, I am yet to encounter it (Aitchey 1993) (Bookchin 1982) (Bookchin 1980).

Religion

While anarchists would accept nothing less than complete religious freedom for all people, there is typically suspicion in the movement towards organized religion. Much like the Marxian analysis of religion, the anarchists have seen that religion has served as a tool used by the elite to control the masses. Nevertheless, one of anarchism's most prolific writers, Leo Tolstoy, did not see eye-to-eye with anarchist principles until after his conversion to Christianity. This has had an interesting effect on anarchist interpretations of the major religions.

While Hinduism and Buddhism are noted for their religious tolerance, some anarchists claim that Jesus' original teaching are decidedly anarchistic. Who, if anyone, they argue, deserves the title of "anarchist" more than those who were put to death as enemies of the state while fighting for the poor, oppressed masses? Indeed, Jesus' teaching (outside of their corruption by established churches) do seem to reflect anarchist currents. The original teachings of Islam seem to be widely criticized by anarchists, however, as they stress hierarchy and obedience to those with state power (provided the state is Muslim). Christianity has also taken fire from anarchists for its sexism and lack of respect for women.

One interesting development in religion in anarchist circles is a new appreciation for mystical traditions that stress experiencing the divine. This has included experiential Christianity, sufism in Islam, as well as a new look at older religious traditions such as witchcraft, Native American religions, and some African tribal religions. Anarchists note that in these traditions, hierarchies are not stressed, but rather an individual experience of the divine or sacred without the mediation of a "leader". Nevertheless, atheism still holds sway over most anarchist circles and religion continues to be a source of argument between many different anarchist organizations (Tolstoy 1990) (Currell 1971) (Bakunin 1971) (Veysey 1973).

Disadvantaged Groups

Anarchists have always been at the forefront of the struggle to liberate disadvantaged groups from oppression. From Emma Goldman to P. J. Proudhon to Noam Chomsky, anarchists from all over the world have fought battles side-by-side with feminists, ant-racists, anti-classists, and anti-homophobes. What differs in the anarchist framework of how these problems are discussed is their focus on capitalism and the State as oppressors of disadvantaged groups and primary causes for their oppression.

Anarchists hold that capitalism, in its hierarchical (mis)management of resources, allows some groups to collect resources at much greater rates than others. This has paved the way for institutions such as racism, sexism, and classism to become firm parts of our society. As long as groups are set against each other with the all-powerful profit margin being the measure of this specter "progress", there will be groups that are set with a disadvantage against the elite. Furthermore, the State protects this state of affairs and (in a capitalist or society) necessarily so. After all, how do political parties finance campaigns and get elected? It is through dollars given to them by individuals and groups that are wealthy enough to do so. Anarchists also hold that reforming campaign financing is not enough to fix the problem. In a capitalist society, the wealthy control the media, distribution, what information goes where, and how much is available to each group. It is therefore necessary to destroy capitalism before any society can make any meaningful claims about equality or democracy. In addition, anarchists have noted that the State has had a marriage of sorts with capital throughout history, protecting corporate non-entities over the interests of the masses of workers.

The final point that the anarchists make clear in their perspective of the causes of inequality is that equality must be a given in an economic sense before old habits like misogyny and racism can be battled. They point to sociological studies that have shown that one of the best ways to curb these tendencies in individuals is to have them work

with those they are prejudiced against in an equal setting. What better way to see to this than through the economic equivalence of socialism or collectivism? Indeed, if these problems are going to be dealt with, the best way seems to be to get people from differing backgrounds to work together as equals. As long as society allows some to constantly gather resources at a much greater rate than others, this seems unlikely (Brown 1993) (Goldman 1910) (Rocker 1937).

Addendum

Most anarchists agree that radical changes must take place for any of these ideas to be able to work. Some point to violent revolution as a necessary evil to achieve the liberation necessary to enact these changes. Others see historical determinism pointing to the eventual end goal of anarchism. The historical determinists show that (although not completely linear in fashion) governments have been decentralizing and resources have been socializing at greater rates as history progresses. If history continues to follow these trends, then the future can only be anarchistic. The historical determinists see the job of the anarchists as being to speed this process along. Others have suggested using theft, sabotage, and clandestine methods to secure a better present while working toward bankrupting the rulers of society. The anarcho-syndicalists point to the general strike as being a positive way to overthrow the capitalist system with less bloodshed than would be necessary in a violent revolution. Anarcho-pacifists seem to prefer this or the former method, as they see a violent revolution as only being a new way for one group to enforce their views upon another through the use of violence.

Whatever tactics that these groups propose, the eventual end is invariably an equal, sustainable, autonomous, and progressive society. To the anarchists, humanity will never be able to reach its full potential individually or as a group until the chains of government and capitalism are discarded for a better way of life that allows for

differences and respects them. They argue that such a future is not utopian and that such claims are only used to justify the status quo. Societies such as the ones envisioned by the anarchists have been the subjects of messianic figures, saints, prophets, as well as criminals, miscreants, and deviants. One question, however, continues to hang on all of their lips when discussing the prospects of an anarchist future: How will we ever know until we try?

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Reflections on some Milestone Works

Deric Shannon

Fabbri's "Bourgeois Influences on Anarchism"

To be quite honest, at first glance I thought I was going to dislike Fabbri's pamphlet just due to the title. In the backdrop of cultural fragmentation that we are currently experiencing in the late modern era in the United States, I find myself objecting to traditional socialist phraseology. The use of terms such as "the working class" and "bourgeois" seem to further fragment our society into disparate groups where solidarity needs to play a stronger role than it ever has. My preponderance of this phraseology has, in fact, led me away from the realization that we live in a society that has a very real ruling class that has continually been at forefront in the attempts at the marginalization of anarchist thought. I had originally thought that the commodification of dissent was a recent phenomenon, but upon further investigation (through the reading of Fabbri's pamphlet) I now realize that this tool of disorganizing the attempts of revolutionary solidarity among the very real working class has been going on for quite some time.

When speaking of the commodification of dissent I am referring to the marketing of bourgeois imitations of revolutionary thought characterized by extreme individualism and the glorification (at worst, sensationalization, at best) of the poor individuals who have, quite literally, bought into these stereotypes. In recent years I saw this tendency in underground music. In Fabbri's time it was the use of writers such as Nietzsche and Max Stirner who claimed anarchism as an ideal that embraced violence, banditry, and chaos. Rarely did works such as those of the aforementioned authors get criticized for their sensationalism (and lack of truth, for that matter). They took a doctrine that held to its heart mass action by organized workers and distorted it to make it look like a camp of individualist terrorists.

It is interesting to note that when Fabbri mentions these misled individuals, he pulls no punches regarding their character (or lack thereof). In his pamphlet he says that they "are the elements who contribute most to discrediting the anarchist ideal, because

from this ideal they extrapolate an infinity of false and ridiculous ramifications, gross errors, deviations, and degenerations, believing that, on the contrary, they're defending 'pure' anarchism. These individuals hardly enter the world of anarchism when they realize that anarchism as conceived by anarchist philosophers, economists, and sociologists is very different than that which they believed in and learned to love through reading the deceptive writings of bourgeois writers. They discover that the movement follows a course far different than they had imagined; in short, they observe that they have before them an idea, a program that is completely organic, coherent, positive, and possible--because it was conceived with the appreciation of the relativity of things, without which life becomes impossible" (Fabbri 1987).

With assaults from the outside by the bourgeois press and from the inside by Marxists and extreme individualists who claimed to be anarchists, it seems that this ideology was doomed to misconception. In Fabbri's time it was books such as *Mysteries of Anarchy* that were marketed and sold as "anarchist" doctrine. Today it is the circle A's and chaos demagoguery that can be bought in any shopping mall that have continued to distort the anarchist ideal.

Fabbri also helps us identify what an anarchist should be after his attempts at breaking the illusions set forth by the bourgeois press. He says in his pamphlet that "anarchy is the ideal of abolishing the violent and coercive authority of human being over human being in every sphere, be it economic, religious, or political. To be an anarchist it suffices to embrace this idea and in consequence to work as much as possible to propagate the concept that only the direct and revolutionary action of the people can lead to a complete social and economic emancipation. All who nourish these sentiments, who hold these ideas and struggle and spread them are indubitably anarchists..."(Fabbri 1987).

In his pamphlet Fabbri not only clears up some common misconceptions about anarchism, but he also defines for the reader what an anarchist really is. I am sure that some would be surprised at the definition and wonder at how they never knew that they

were, in fact, anarchists. Perhaps if Fabbri's pamphlets had wider distribution some of the common misconceptions of anarchism could be dispelled.

Luigi Fabbri's *Anarchy and 'Scientific' Communism*

In Fabbri's pamphlet (which serves as a rebuttal to Nikolai Bukharin's piece of the same title), he sets out first to expose the false accusations of Bukharin towards the anarchists and then to set out a specific agenda for these revolutionaries. One can see the offense that Fabbri had taken from Bukharin's pamphlet in nearly every page of this writing. The beginning sets out a retort that is dripping with sarcasm and he sets out the program of the anarchists afterward in a pragmatic way that can brook no argument.

In his first section titled, *The bourgeois phraseology of "scientific" communism*, Fabbri uses his writing as a platform to refute some of the more ludicrous statements made by Bukharin. He also sets out in no uncertain terms that he believes Bukharin's piece to be arrogant and elitist. He asks the reader to consider "the pompous terms in which Bukharin addresses the anarchists, throwing in their faces the fact that he is condescending to debate theories.....of which he is ignorant" (Bukharin 1981: 14). He finishes his refutations with this remark to Bukharin and his ilk:

"Take it from us, you 'scientific' communists, that we could easily reply in kind to this sort of attack, were it not that we believe we would be demeaning ourselves and that there would be no point in so doing! It is not among the anarchists that one could most easily find 'those who' - as Bukharin puts it- 'exploit the revolution for their own private gain', in Russia or outside it...." (Bukharin 1981: 15).

Not only do Fabbri's arguments point to the tendency of the communist writers to marginalize anarchist thought, but they also point to a greater problem within the socialist movement in all spheres. That is to say, that in their desperate need to be heard and understood, all sides in this debate have tended to disparage theorists from other camps where solidarity is desperately needed to effectively take on the bourgeoisie and win any battle.

In his next section titled, *The State and the Centralisation of Production*, Fabbri talks about the major arguments between Marxists and anarchists and, furthermore, shows where 'Marxists' have stopped following the writings of the very person that they are named for. He says that "originally anarchists and socialists had shared a common goal in the abolition of the state, and that on that particular issue marxists had parted company with the theories of Marx himself" (Bukharin 1981: 20). He, however, takes on Marx's original conception of the withering away of the state when he states the following:

"We do not find this marxist notion of what anarchy is acceptable, for we do not believe that the state will naturally or inevitably die away automatically as a result of the abolition of classes. The state is more than an outcome of class divisions; it is, at one and the same time, the creator of privilege, thereby bringing about new class divisions. Marx was in error in thinking that once classes had been abolished the state would die a natural death, as if through lack of nourishment. The state will not die away unless it is deliberately destroyed, just as capitalism will not cease to exist unless it is put to death through expropriation. Should a state be left standing, it will create a new ruling class about itself, that is, if it chooses not to make its peace with the old one. In short, class divisions

will persist and classes will never be finally abolished as long as the state remains" (Bukharin 1981: 20).

He finishes his polemic with, perhaps, one of the best catch phrases of anarchism to date when he says "...according to marxism, the state must die a natural death, whereas anarchism holds that it can only die a violent one" (Bukharin 1981: 20).

In Fabbri's third section, *The "Provisional" Dictatorship and the State*, he refers to Marxists as state-worshippers and further helps the reader recognize some of the distinctions between Marxist-communists and anarchist-communists. He sums up the failings of the theories of his statist comrades when he says "(t)he mistake of the authoritarian communists in this connection is the belief that fighting and organising are impossible without submission to a government; and thus they regard anarchists- in view of their being hostile to any form of government, even a transitional one- as the foes of all organisation and all co-ordinated struggle" (Bukharin 1981: 27). He further explains his position that any submission to an extra-organizational body constitutes the creation of a new class of bureaucrats that, in effect, rule the thoughts and positions of the workers. He also goes into further detail explaining that once this power is achieved by these bureaucrats, that they will do whatever is in their power to maintain this relationship to the workers. In effect, he is saying that once any person (be they worker or bourgeois) is given the opportunity to rule over other people, they develop new class interests that collide with those of the working masses.

Fabbri's next two sections entail a semantic argument on the origins of communism and a historical analysis of the anarchists in the Russian Revolution. His pamphlet stands as an eloquent piece refuting the claims of statist communists and as a bitter reply to the aforementioned work of Nikolai Bukharin. In hindsight, it is easy to see where Fabbri's arguments withstood the test of time. The collective "communist" governments in the world never displayed any intentions of "withering away" their state power. Perhaps this points to revolutionary Barcelona during the Spanish Revolution

when the anarchists organized industry collectively as our best indication of how a socialist organization of society can be achieved and maintained.

Rudolph Rocker's *Anarchism and Sovietism*

In this pamphlet, written by Rudolph Rocker, Mr. Rocker asserts that the soviet system (outside of its perversion in the former Soviet Union) was a system based upon mutual aid, localism, and politics by council, thus portraying an anarchistic vision of socialism. He further states that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat that corrupted the soviets and, consequently, made all political and economic decisions for them, undermined their original intent and turned the Russian Revolution into a despotic regime that did not even resemble what it was supposed to from its infancy and into its later days. He begins his pamphlet, however, with a section called "Anarchism: Its Aims and Means" in which he attempts to clear up any misunderstandings of anarchism before he begins his writing on the soviets.

He starts this first section with an analysis mirroring Marx's of capitalism in which he states that "(t)he portentous development of our present economic system, leading to a mighty accumulation of social wealth in the hands of privileged minorities and to a continuous impoverishment of the great masses of the people, prepared the way for the present political and social reaction" (Bukharin 1981: 53). He continues this analysis, again, mirroring Marx, but this time seems to be discussing alienation when he says that we have created a system "(w)here industry is everything and man is nothing" and that here "begins the realm of a ruthless economic despotism whose workings are no less disastrous than those of any political despotism" (Bukharin 1981: 54).

Here is where Rocker begins widening his scope and veers away from a Marxist analysis into the anarchist camp. He explains further that these two processes combine with one another and come from the same source. He blasts those who wield economic

power and those that wield political power alike when he states that "(t)he economic dictatorship of the monopolies and the political dictatorship of the totalitarian state are the twin outgrowths of the same social objectives, and the directors of both have the presumption to try to reduce all the countless expressions of social life to the dehumanised tempo of the machine and to tune everything organic to the lifeless rhythm of the political apparatus" (Bukharin 1981: 54). It is here that he makes it clear that power wielded by an economic elite or a political elite (even if it terms itself the "dictatorship of the proletariat") first concerns itself with perpetuating its own interests and is thereby a bourgeois outgrowth from socialist thought.

From here throughout the rest of the pamphlet he concentrates his ire for the so-called "Socialist" Republics of the Soviet Union. He explains that the soviets were originally envisioned to be like the worker councils encouraged by the anarchists, and goes further to state that the centralized government of the Soviet Union controlled so much activity of the soviets that they never had the local power from the outset to control any of their own activity, much less organize with one another to maximize the economic output of each through mutual aid. In his final analysis of any dictatorship (including that of the "proletariat" in Russia) he scathingly critiques its origins by saying "it is not a product of socialist thinking. Dictatorship is no child of the labour movement, but a regrettable inheritance from the bourgeoisie, passed into the proletarian camp to guarantee its 'happiness'. Dictatorship is closely linked with the lust for political power, which is likewise bourgeois in origin" (Bukharin 1981: 69).

Overall I found Rocker's piece to be well-written and much more inclusive than many anarchist works. Although he seems to be closely aligned with the communist anarchists ideologically, he includes the perspectives of the anarcho-syndicalists, trade unionists, and democratic anarchists in his analyses. This is a refreshing approach when compared to most other anarchist writings at this time that sought to put forward only their own segment's views and, thus, ignoring one of anarchism's finest appeals-- to

include a development of programmatic statements that continue to evolve rather than stick to only one approach.

On Philosophical Anarchism: Its Rise, Decline and Eclipse

This piece, written by Victor S. Yarros, is valuable in helping the reader to understand why anarchist voices have been marginalized from within the movement and without. Mr. Yarros speaks from the theoretical dominant paradigm of his time to refute Benjamin Tucker's ideas of "individualist anarchism". That is to say, Yarros uses the perspective of the New Deal Era democrat to refute Tucker's anarchist ideas. Furthermore, in learning more about Tucker's writings and his magazine *Liberty* one can gain an insight as to how people who identify themselves as anarchists can be harmful to the very movement that they claim to support. Tucker serves as a good example of the self-styled "anarchist" that developed his theory based on spurious definitions of anarchism and the study of a select few of anarchist writers. That this piece was included in a sociological journal is an indication that some sociologists included the anarchist voices in their original development of social theory before it was seemingly discarded. It is also an example of a sociological writing that led to anarchism's demise in scholarly circles.

Mr. Yarros begins his article giving a brief autobiographic sketch of Benjamin Tucker (complete with his own commentary, of course). In this sketch the reader learns that Benjamin Tucker was the editor of the Magazine *Liberty*. He began his education at the Boston Polytechnical Institute, but stopped short of a degree to travel for a year and study in Europe in hopes of becoming a radical journalist. It was here that he encountered the writings of P. J. Proudhon and took to heart Proudhon's somewhat spurious definition of anarchism.

First, Tucker incorporated the ideas of Herbert Spencer, Josiah Warren, Lysander Spooner, Stephen Pearl Andrews, with Proudhon's and others to develop his own ideas regarding anarchism and how it should be defined. Later he encountered Max Stirner's *The Ego and His Own* and attempted to add Stirner's unique version of egoism into his philosophy. He ended his journalistic writings having influenced some subscribers in intellectual circles (including Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor), but never having a larger market than a few hundred subscribers.

Tucker's version of anarchism strays from the paths made by most of the classical anarchists and he seems to have incorporated an exaggerated egoism into his later writings. It is interesting to note that he started his magazine in the late 1890's which means that it must have been one of the first works of any American anarchists. This also means that the first "anarchist" works that Americans had access to were distorted and decidedly anti-socialist. Tucker's platforms included some socialization of resources, but he never complained about capitalism, rather, he complained about government interference in economics. Rather than the democratization of the economy that most classical anarchists espoused, Tucker saw a world in which intellectual property was abandoned, land could only be "owned" if it were used, monopolies would be destroyed by strong unionization, and free trade would still reign the major industries. How he expected all of these ideas to co-exist seems to be a mystery.

In Yarros analysis of Tucker's work, he uses the dominant paradigm of the time to refute Tucker's analysis of statism. He offers a simplistic explanation for the eclipse of Benjamin Tucker's "individualist anarchism". He explains in his article that he believes that the growth of trusts and syndicates and increasingly "socialistic" forms of economic organization are the main reasons for the lack of relevance of Tucker's ideas to the "modern" world (circa 1936). Considering that this piece was written before the New Deal era and in the midst of the Great Depression one must wonder where Yarros got his ideas. After all, what forms of socialistic economic organization were Mr. Yarros

referring to? He makes mention of labor advocates and trade unions attempting to align with the state to gain concessions from capitalists, but how much success can we attribute to these groups before the construction of the (inefficient and tiny) welfare state that was created after the New Deal policies were enacted? Furthermore, in hindsight it can easily be seen that the growth of syndicates and trusts have increased the *laissez faire* policies of the United States government toward large corporations, sometimes even going as far as providing them with tax dollars rather than see the revenue go to the working masses in present times. Mr. Yarros' explanation may be found wanting in hindsight, but the article is a good representation of the dominant paradigm in the United States at the time.

This study is socially relevant as both a critique of one of the influencing theories of social radicals and to delve into a theory of social organization that attempted to critique the institutions of the time that seemed to work directly against the majority of the population. Yarros also stated in his article that although he felt that Tucker's theories had been eclipsed, one can find a strain of the libertarian tradition in his thoughts that continued to influence politics into the mid nineteen thirties.

The reason that this article is important to include in research is that it offers a glimpse into why anarchist theory has been marginalized in the field of sociology. Furthermore, it provides some insight into some of the bourgeois influences in anarchist thought that the writer Luigi Fabbri wrote so much about. Tucker's so-called "anarchism" went directly against the socialist strain of classical anarchist thought and his extreme individualistic interpretations of the writings of P.J. Proudhon point to a lack of understanding of anarchist principles in the movement in its early development in the United States. Finding these contradictions can help elucidate some of the reasons why the early anarchists were often misrepresented and misunderstood.

Anarchist Voices by Paul Avrich

This oral history of anarchism in the United States is a large volume of respondents in the American anarchist movement that gave Mr. Avrich stories of their past, hopes, dreams, and difficulties. The book is amazing in that it has stories from the mouths of some of the key figures in the movement and relatives of others that could not be reached for its writing. It is also helpful in that it humanizes some of the gargantuan figures that have helped (or haunted) the movement since its inception.

His first section, on pioneers of the movement, is especially helpful in this regard. It is titled *Pioneers* and utilizes sections by the offspring of Rudolph Rocker, Benjamin Tucker, Johann Most, and Peter Kropotkin as well as having stories told by some that were in the movement at the time. This section focuses on the birthing pains of the movement in the United States and is of inestimable value from a psychological/historical viewpoint. As the rest of the book, it is written in plain speech that belies the sympathies of the storytellers towards the masses of working people.

The next section, *Emma Goldman*, focuses on people who knew this feminist pioneer. The stories are both heart-warming and troubling at times, showing many sides to this important figure in anarchist history. It follows her rise to prominence in intellectual circles and also her fall as she protested the first World War. Told from the perspective of friends and close associates, one can get an idea about how Ms. Goldman reacted to many small victories and countless grand disappointments.

The following section focuses on those close to the martyred Sacco and Vanzetti including the perspective of Sacco's grandson, Spencer. Throughout the perspectives of every person interviewed a story is woven of two passionate Italian anarchists who were ultimately framed by the United States government after the riot in Haymarket Square in Chicago. Although both gentlemen worked as active pacifists and were inclined to

peaceful protest, the government found them guilty of throwing bombs at the great labor strike. They were summarily executed, some would say, for their beliefs.

Mr. Avrich then goes into some of the attempts at anarchist schools and colonies created in the United States. The interviewees shirk no subject including free love, war protests, birth control availability, violence, and pacifism as they explain their goals to further the creation of an anarchistic society. This section, perhaps, is where the dreamers emerge and hypnotize the reader with stories of possibilities of creating a more sane world. This group as well catalogs its displacement at the hands of governmental authorities and, sometimes, everyday people who misunderstood their actions and goals. It is in this section that the programmatic difficulties of the anarchists are most thoroughly discussed and brought to light in everyday language.

In his next section, the writer interviews ethnic anarchists and brings to light the interplay of different groups of ethnicities working together in this field. He uncovers a Chinese anarchist movement and various Slovak, Italian, and Hispanic groups that banded together with their majority counterparts (if workers can be considered "majority") to help dispel the myths created by the wealthy and powerful. These groups, perhaps, experienced the most hardship from authorities due to not only their beliefs, but the ethnic character of their members. The reader is here surprised at finding such an array of willing adherents to the anarchist line of thought.

In Mr. Avrich's last section, *The 1920s and After*, he spends much of his time on some of the major contributors of modern anarchist thought and participants in the movements collectives and organized groups from the East to the West Coast. In this section the arguments between various anarchist groups and the communists is brought into sharper focus as the reader experiences some of the attempts of various "Marxist" parties to infiltrate these groups and convert its members to a more statist approach to socialism. It is also shown how the movement has primarily evolved into one that embraces the concepts of socialism while casting away some of the more utopian theories

of various statist socialist groups. Here a coherent program can be felt and its launch seen into the later parts of the twentieth century.

Mr. Avrigh has obviously worked hard in obtaining interviews from some of the sources he found for his book. I have found it an intelligent read and extremely informative in connection to the psychology of members of a movement in this country that has experienced blacklisting, murder, and subjugation throughout the entirety of its existence. If Mr. Avrigh's efforts were to attempt to create a piece that humanizes a movement that is often painted with bestial colors, he has succeeded admirably in doing so.

Mikhail Bakunin's *God and the State*

In this pamphlet, Mikhail Bakunin writes about his atheist and anarchist convictions, synthesizing them to show the relationship between religion and government. The arguments in his pamphlet reflect his ambivalence towards both religion and government as forms of maintaining social control over the masses by the elite. His writing is based mostly on his passion for his subject and conjectural social theory, but remains a standing stone work in anarchist circles. Some even attribute the burning of so many Catholic churches during the Spanish Revolution to his propagandic efforts, pointing to this pamphlet as a milestone.

Bakunin begins his pamphlet approaching the subject as an argument between the idealists and the materialists. He spends almost no time at all rejecting the idealist argument and glorifying the materialist approach to the question of religion. He takes the usual Marxist approach in his conception of history when he states, "Yes, the whole history of humanity, intellectual and moral, political and social, is but a reflection of its economic history" (Bakunin 1971: 9). Where he departs from Marx is his analysis of *all* government as tools of social control as well as religious institutions.

He also uses the biblical story of Adam and Eve as an allegorical statement about man's innate desire to rebel and to think. One can get a sense of his disdain for religion as he says that "(t)he Bible, which is a very interesting and here and there very profound book when considered as one of the oldest manifestations of human wisdom and fancy, expresses the truth very naively in its myth of original sin" (Bakunin 1971: 10). He goes on to say that "Jehovah had just created Adam and Eve, to satisfy we know what caprice; no doubt to while away his time, which must weigh heavy on his hands in his eternal egoistic solitude, or that he might have some new slaves" (Bakunin 1971: 10).

He then finishes the story holding up Satan as "the eternal rebel, the first freethinker and the emancipator of worlds" (Bakunin 1971: 10). He explains that this story is an attempt of early man to recognize the right and the necessity of rebellion if society is to reach its fullest potential. Interestingly enough, Bakunin named his first son Lucifer after the "first rebel". He explains that Satan led humanity in this myth to knowledge and rebellion which, combined, lead society to better modes of organization.

Later in his work, Bakunin gives due credit to Jesus as well. He calls him the "preacher of the poor" and makes mention of the role of women in the development of the early church (Bakunin 1971: 75). His anarchist sensibilities take hold here as well, showing Jesus as an organizer of the wretched masses that was killed as an enemy of the State. He says that Jesus "was hanged, as a matter of course, by the representatives of the official morality and public order of that period" (Bakunin 1971: 75). This, again, reflects Bakunin's focus on statism as an unnecessary evil that deprives humanity of some of its greatest thinkers.

Bakunin's analysis of religion does not part very far from the Marxist line. It is interesting to note that Marx helped translate this work while he was staying in Paris. Bakunin, however, takes pains to show that religion is often used as a tool by the State to keep the working masses obedient to the powers that be. Combined with Bertrand Russel's theory that communism is a religion, this could have been a death blow to the

Marxist segment of socialist organizers. However, power and monopoly showed their faces in the beginnings of even the First International to stop this from ever happening. Still, Bakunin remains an influential writer in anarchist and Marxist circles alike.

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The Late Modern Split in the Anarchist Movement

Deric Shannon

Traditionally political parties and ideologies have been defined by where they exist on a single left-right line. Communism has been placed at the far left with fascism being placed on the far right. Republicans and democrats are usually placed close together on the center-right with the labor parties of Western Europe on the center-left. Further investigation of this “line”, however, brings some troubling problems to light.

An ideology or party would be considered far left if their economic beliefs entailed the socialist concept of the nationalization of resources. That same party, however, would be considered far right if they believed in a strong centralized state apparatus. Thus Marxist ideology would be considered far right on government control and far left on economics. The libertarian party in the United States would also hold two different areas on the “line” placing them center-left on government social control and far right on economics. It appears that we need two distinct “lines” to measure a particular ideology’s “leftness” or “rightness”. Perhaps the only ideology that can claim to be on the far left on both “lines” traditionally has been anarchism. A split in the movement recently, however, has brought one group away from the left in the economic spectrum.

What has separated the anarchists from any other political ideology is their call for “the abolition of the State” (Engels 1988: 27). In order for this call to be understood, however, one must first operationalize the term “State”. In classical anarchist literature the State has been defined as an organized numerical minority that uses force or the threat of force to enforce their will upon the masses. With this definition the State seems nothing more than a gang with the firepower or muscle to enforce their will upon a majority of people. In most early anarchist literature, indeed, this is the conception that they have of the State apparatus.

In this literature many speakers for the movement talked of political organization with massive democracy being the norm, rather than a hierarchical structure that made decisions from the top down. The anarchists talked about how roads would be maintained and resources would be distributed. Although such subjects seem to

inherently involve a State apparatus, they believed that political mobilization and societal organization was not only possible without this apparatus, but would also be more equal and less chaotic. They also aligned themselves with the socialists of the time saying that every anarchist is a socialist, but not every socialist is an anarchist. The split that has occurred recently in the movement, however, has negated any meaning this statement once held.

Social Anarchism

As stated previously, the social (or classical) anarchists were closely aligned with the Marxists, thus, to understand their critique of societal organization one must first understand the socialist critique of capitalism. The socialists saw contradictions inherent in capitalism that would eventually lead to its destruction-- namely the distribution of resources for individual benefit rather than social benefit and the ownership of the means of production in the hands of a small few. In Marx's critique of capitalism, he believed that this societal organization caused the alienation of workers. It was his belief (and the belief of other socialists) that it was the ultimate future of the working class to overthrow this hegemonic control of the means of production and its subsequent replacement with democratic control.

The anarchists differed with the Marxists, however, in that Marx believed that after the coming revolution the proletariat would then have to create a dictatorship to protect the revolution against counter-revolutionary forces and to redistribute resources. The anarchists believed that the creation of such a powerful State apparatus would lead to hegemonic control of resources by the members of the political machine rather than the working class. Thus, an anarchist assessment of Marxist "communism" was that it would actually become state capitalism in which the State was the beneficiary of the wealth

produced by labor. This prediction seems to have proven true in the “socialist” regimes of Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

The anarchists sought to protect the revolution with the creation of local militias. During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) when the anarchists held Barcelona, it seemed that these militias were adequate until the betrayal of the anarchist militias by the Stalinists who seized their guns and agitated against the revolutionary forces of the anarchist CNT and the Marxist POUMs. They sought to replace the existing State apparatus with decentralized control by trade unions and worker councils. Thus, the anarchist future was not a utopian vision in which complete equality would be created, but rather a societal organization in which the greatest level of equality would be created by democratic control of resources.

In all fairness, it must be stated that there was some disagreement among the early anarchists about this societal organization and that, indeed, not all anarchists of the early 1900s were socialists. A small camp was created by the writer Max Stirner (author of *The Ego and his Own*) who labeled themselves as individualist anarchists, who believed in the capitalist mode of economic organization. This camp, however, remained small and eventually died out after the creation of the First International.

The Struggle over the First International (mid 1800s)

Within the First International one can find the early marginalization of anarchist thought in the struggles between Mikhail Bakunin and Karl Marx. The International Working Men’s Association was created to unite these disparate groups of workers into an international body capable of destroying the wage system and taking on the bourgeois governments of the time. This grandiose goal of international unity was never fully realized, in large part due to the internal struggles between the anarchists and the communists headed by Marx and Bakunin respectively.

Marx sought to maintain leadership over the International and his control was questioned by Bakunin. What began was a propaganda war to win the hearts and minds

of the First International. Bakunin was a Blanquist, in that he believed that a revolutionary force could be created as a secret society existing outside of the International. Through the use of this society he would control the inner workings of the International and manipulate it to achieve his “anarchist” goals.

When Marx uncovered this plot, he was scathing in his response. He moved to have Bakunin and his group expelled from the International and published documents that pointed to his involvement in this conspiracy. Bakunin attempted to exonerate himself in letters to the International to which Marx wrote eloquent replies pointing to Bakunin’s lack of trustworthiness. In his replies to Bakunin’s letters, he picks them apart piecemeal and criticizes his letters—sometimes sentence by sentence. He also points to Bakunin’s supposed anti-worker rhetoric and complicity with the bourgeoisie with replies such as “Here however the bourgeois donkey’s ears protrude. Where the capitalists are concerned ‘blame’ evaporates into ignorance, but where the workers are concerned ignorance is made the cause of their guilt” (Engels 1988: 342). And indeed Marx supplies us with this passage of one of Bakunin’s letter to drive his point home:

“ ‘Thus it comes’ (namely, through ignorance) ‘that if they can only save something on the rent they will move into dark, damp and inadequate dwellings, which are in short a mockery of all the demands of hygiene... that often several families together rent a single dwelling, and even a single room—all this in order to spend as little as possible on rent, while on the other hand they *squander* their income *in truly sinful fashion on drink and all sorts of idle pleasures*” (Engels 1988: 342).

His assessment of Bakunin continually uses inflammatory language referring to him as “Saint Bakunin” and claiming that he wanted to become a messianic figure to the international working masses. His claims are largely not unfounded, but by making these claims he sought to not only discredit Bakunin, but anarchism in general. In his synopses

he managed to alienate the anarchists from the First International, effectively splitting the movement into factions that could have been much stronger had they continued to act in unity.

His attempts at control over the First International after his dissemination, however, were largely successful. This led to the marginalization of anarchist theory and the subsequent placement of Marx as the so-called “father of ‘scientific’ socialism”. This marginalization can still be seen today as Marx’s theories are still taught in schools all over the world, while anarchist theory is either negated or (more commonly) ignored altogether. This process is worth mentioning in order to gain an understanding of why anarchist theory usually goes hand-in-hand with commonly held misconceptions (e.g. its placement with terrorist groups or the belief that anarchy means chaos) or complete ignorance.

The Social Anarchist

Social anarchism has had popular success in the western world, most notably in Spain where the movement reached its zenith during the Civil War (1936-1939). Italy also had a large anarchist movement spearheaded by Enrico Malatesta and Luigi Fabbri. France also had a significant anarchist movement that began with Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and continues to thrive today. In the United States the movement seemed to have climaxed in the Industrial Workers of the World, as leaders such as Vincent St. John and “big” Bill Haywood continually agitated for an “anarcho-syndicalist” interpretation of social theory (Dobbs 1980: 103). The movement has also had success in the East and Latin America with a large contingent in Russia and marginal support in such disparate regions as Vietnam, China, Chile, North and South Korea. There have also been recent reports of anarchist involvement in Uganda and Sudan according to “The Popular Anarchist Newsletter” (an e-mail service for the international anarchist movement).

It seems that the movement is revitalizing as well. Documents written by anarchists are being re-released by publishers and worker controlled cooperatives such as

the Penguin Press, the Haymarket Press, and the Fifth Estate. Independent magazines thrive online and in paper copies throughout subcultural movements whose foci include leftist political mobilization. Furthermore, while touring the East Coast this summer my band carried literature for newly opened offices of the IWW and other anarchist organizations in exchange for a place to sleep for the night. According to members of these organizations it is becoming increasingly common for them to supply migrants of many varieties with propaganda “for the road”. With the use of the Internet for networking, different groups are finding it easier to locate one another for support in these endeavors. I personally know of three such groups in Muncie, not to mention the plethora that exist throughout the major cities of the United States. It must be stated, however, that the primitivists have made use of the internet more often than the social anarchists and as a result this faction is gaining greater support every day.

Anarcho-primitivism

Anarcho-primitivism (also known as primitivism, anti-authoritarian primitivism, radical primitivism, or the anti-civilization movement) felt its birthing pains with the countercultural movement of the 1960s. Many politicized members of the counterculture and creators of the New Left called for a return to nature. This call included some proponents that humanity should not only try to live in a sustainable society, but that we should return to primitive lifestyles to achieve this goal. Throughout the time from the sixties to the present the “modern primitive” movement consisted mostly of unorganized adherents who flocked to tattoo parlors for piercings, tattooing, and even brandings to emulate the cultures that they sought to aggrandize. It was not until the mid-nineties that they began to flock under the banner of anarchism and programs were set forth by various gurus of the movement.

Ironically enough, the adherents of anarcho-primitivism use the Internet as their primary source of education, argument, and propaganda. My first encounter with the movement, however, came from a magazine sent to me from Kevin McElmurray, a doctoral student in Columbia, Missouri. In this magazine, called “Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed” I found authors such as John Zerzan and Bob Black carrying a fierce debate with Dr. Murray Bookchin, one of the self-styled leaders of the social anarchist bloc. I dismissed the movement at first as another offshoot of anarchism that used the term to sensationalize their activities until I began to see these arguments pop up all over the Internet and being brought into anarchist meetings and discussion forums.

Upon further investigation I found that this new movement within the larger anarchist movement to be a growing segment in anarchist circles. Members of this new ideology called for anarchism to move beyond “workerism” and “Leftism” and to look further in history for the creation of coercive power relationships. They believe that civilization is the beginning of coercion and hierarchical systems of resource distribution and that until we destroy civilization as we know it, humanity will never be able to throw off the shackles of the State (Vandiver).

Some proponents of anarcho-primitivism have labeled this movement “post-modern anarchism” to indicate that they do not wish to sacralize the lifestyles of primitive societies that have already existed, but that they wished to “synthesize the primal with the contemporary” in anarchism (Moore). To the anarcho-primitivist, social anarchism (and any leftist doctrine) is liberal and reformist. The only revolutionary or radical doctrine, to them, can be one in which civilization itself is agitated against (Black). Furthermore, the anarcho-primitivists state that any ideology or political doctrine can only be a glorified gang (statist) in which members attempt to take control of people and sway their opinions. This undercurrent has caused a decided lack of doctrine or coherent political philosophy on how the future society should look or how such a society could be maintained or even realized.

This lack of any doctrine makes it virtually impossible to define what exactly anarcho-primitivism is. To further obfuscate matters, authors such as John Moore have stated that it is a post-modern movement. Other writers, however, such as John Zerzan, vehemently argue against this assertion and much of their writings are wrangling and infighting among adherents about how to define the movement. One thing that seems to bring together most members, however, is their intellectual hatred of Murray Bookchin. I have found a number of articles refuting the assertions of Bookchin and these seem to be as commonplace as articles and writings attempting to define the movement. This tendency is not surprising, as most of the adherents of primitivist thought are young and Bookchin's writings are often littered with intellectual insults geared toward younger anarchist thinkers.

Interesting enough, the anarcho-primitivists and social anarchists can be found working together in World Trade Organization protests and during resistance meetings all over the country. Most anarchists (that I have met) today seem to have ideas from both camps and forsake identifying completely with either ideology (or lack thereof). It seems that this willingness to work together comes from a pride in the current growth in the anarchist movement as a whole and a desire to see that anarchist ideas do not suffer from the marginalization that they have in the past due to infighting.

The Future of the Anarchist Movement

It seems that the anarcho-primitivist camp is both accommodating modernity and reacting against it at the same time. Their call for a return to the primitive brings pictures of Kurzweil's neo-Luddite movement to mind when he speaks of late modernity. Their analysis of modern society seems to reject the dialectical materialism of most radical theorists, precluding any analyses of the greater social forces that bring about necessary changes in society. This sets them against the modernization process. Their denial that

industrialization and modernization are social forces that would create the necessary preconditions for a social movement and their fight in direct opposition to industrialization in the third world has created a movement that fights against forces that seem inevitable (and in most circles extremely desirable).

Their creation of an open ideology with a lack of doctrine and their embracing of primitive methods of self-realization, however, aligns them well with the late modern model, particularly the resurgence of Ellwood's alternative tradition. Indeed, many that identify with the anti-civilization movement belong to New Age groups that practice experiential religious traditions. It seems that their idealization of primitive cultures goes further than just economic or governmental structures, but also includes the spiritual. This resurgence in experiential traditions can be found in the greater society outside of the movement as well.

I see the future for the radical primitivist movement in much the same way that Kurzweil sees the unraveling of his neo-Luddite movement. It seems likely that groups such as this may turn to terrorist tactics such as the Unabomber to get their point across. As the modernization process continues, however, and our technology continually creates more cures for diseases, more laborsaving commodities, and greater communication between all cultures, most people will appreciate these changes and deny the thesis that the primitivists hold dear—that we must interrupt this process and destroy the very thing that makes these advancements possible.

The future seems bleak for the social anarchist movement at first glance as well. Most class-based critiques of society have become status-based critiques and socialist ideas have been scorned by intellectuals and workers alike. It is my belief that the movement is doomed to failure unless a catastrophic occurrence happens that causes us to rethink our ideas about the supremacy of capitalism. However, as capitalist societies continue to war over expanding markets and our ability to kill one another grows daily, I believe that the time will come when it will become necessary for us to rethink these

views. Those with wealth and power have shown time after time that they are willing to kill and sometimes die in order to retain societal constructs that allows them keep this hegemonic control. I see no reason for this to change. Furthermore, as the class war begins to be played out on a global level, new factions of the oppressed are willing to create new destructive devices or methods in ways that were unimaginable in the past. As this struggle continues it seems likely that a catastrophic war will be fought that causes us to reconsider our current management and distribution of resources. That is, of course, if we do not completely destroy ourselves in the process of questioning the current system.

It seems an idealistic analysis—that eventually we will turn to anarchism out of necessity. With two world wars in the past century and the governments of the world seeming to gear up for another global confrontation, however, my analysis stands. It seems likely, as well, when viewing history throughout the process of modernization. Governments have been continually decentralizing and resources have been increasingly nationalized throughout this process. If these trends hold, then an anarchist society would be the ultimate end.

Furthermore, the social anarchist idea of individual autonomy balanced with societal interdependence seems to fit late modern life quite well. Also, with the greater exchange of ideas possible through globalization the anarchist movement has been able to gain converts and mobilize people at a rate unthought of in the past. It must be mentioned, however, that my profound respect for social anarchist ideas and my hope that such a future is attainable could bias my analysis of its likelihood. With some of the alternatives pictured by negative utopian writers such as George Orwell or Aldous Huxley or shown to the world in the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I believe that more consideration of the socialist critiques of capitalism and Marxism should be given more attention. It is my hope that more people are turned to this view and that a world can be created from the ashes of the old that deals with societal problems in a much more sane way than wars and prisons.

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